

SECTION IV. BQA CERTIFICATION

# BQA Certification Procedures

## ► *What is BQA Certification?*

Beef Quality Assurance certification is a process by which producers accept responsibility for the actions under which cattle on their production unit were produced. It is also a way for the beef industry to maintain its independence from regulatory agencies. The following procedures must be followed in order to become BQA certified.

## ► *Who Gets Certified?*

It is important to understand that people become BQA certified; operations or production units do not. It is the people who practice the guidelines and the people who implement the requirements and recommendations which impact the end value of the cattle. Therefore, certification is done on an individual basis, not by facility or production unit.

## ► *BQA Certification Procedures*

Producers become eligible for certification by:

1. An individual representing the operation attends the BQA certification training program, becomes BQA certified, signs BQA contract, and remains an integral part of the operation.



2. Operation agrees to be subject to random BQA on-site audits conducted by the trained audit team.
3. Re-certification will be required every two years.
4. Satisfactory completion of the two-part BQA certification training and evaluation process by the producer (or designated representative who is an integral part of the operation).

## ► *Certification and Re-Certification: Third Party Verification*

As part of the certification and two-year re-certification process, random third-party verification audits will be conducted. These are voluntary inspections conducted by independent, trained representatives of the BQA program. The beef industry has been commended on the success of such self-regulating BQA programs by governmental officials, and this is the next step to maintain industry independence.

Furthermore, voluntary inspection provides producers with an outside source to address the proper use of good management practices and their effectiveness. Random audits or inspections are not meant to criticize producers' practices but to assist producers in improving management to increase production efficiencies and to gain a source of credibility for the BQA certification process.

## Mid-Atlantic Beef Quality Assurance Personal Contract for Certification

Please answer the following questions **Yes** or **No** as they relate to the Mid-Atlantic BQA program.

1. **(Yes or No)** A quality feed control program should be maintained for all incoming ingredients to reduce food-borne illness.
2. **(Yes or No)** Only FDA approved medicated feed additives will be used in rations, and they will be used in accordance with the FDA label, including administration procedure, dosage and withdrawal time. Extra-label drug use of feed additives will not be used at any time or for any reason.
3. **(Yes or No)** Records of feed medications and additives will be maintained for at least 2 years after use.
4. **(Yes or No)** All individual injections will be given in the neck region regardless of being administered subcutaneously or intramuscularly.
5. **(Yes or No)** All individual animal treatments will strictly follow only FDA/USDA/EPA guidelines and products that cause tissue damage will be avoided.
6. **(Yes or No)** Products will be administered at the recommended dosage and will be administered in such a manner where there will not be more than 10cc per IM site administered.
7. **(Yes or No)** Treatment procedures will comply with either label directions or as prescribed by a veterinarian with a valid Veterinarian/Client/Patient Relationship.
8. **(Yes or No)** All treatments administered extra label will be kept to a minimum and when extra label treatments are given they will comply with the prescribed extended withdrawal time.
9. **(Yes or No)** Treatments will either be recorded on a group/pen or individual basis. Records will consist of date, pen/individual identification, product used, amount given, route and location given, withdrawal time, tentative diagnosis, and outcome of treatment.
10. **(Yes or No)** All cattle shipped will be checked to verify withdrawal times have been met and shipment date should be recorded.
11. **(Yes or No)** Should there be any question about withdrawal periods being met, veterinarians will evaluate the treatment history against information provided by the Food Animal Residue Avoidance Databank or the animal will be subject to pass a residue screening test.
12. **(Yes or No)** All treatment records will be kept for two years and transferred with the cattle as they move from one operation to another, and will also be available for inspection by Beef Quality Assurance staff or other named individuals in order to determine compliance.
13. **(Yes or No)** The operation will strive to prevent bruising during animal handling.
14. **(Yes or No)** Should a previous owner request performance information of cattle, all information available will be relayed back to them if possible.
15. **(Yes or No)** I have reviewed the Mid-Atlantic Beef Quality Assurance handbook. I agree to abide by the guidelines of the Mid-Atlantic Beef Quality Assurance program. I will do my best to produce safe, wholesome beef that meets or exceeds consumer expectations.
16. **(Yes or No)** No ruminant derived feedstuffs will be fed to cattle.
17. **(Yes or No)** Records should be kept for a minimum of 2 years (3 for restricted use pesticides).

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Print Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**BQA Trainer:** \_\_\_\_\_ **City, State, Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Veterinarian:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone #:** \_\_\_\_\_